

Message Text

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43

ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IOE-00 EB-07 AGR-05 AID-05

FDRE-00 TRSE-00 L-03 NEA-10 (ISO) W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5172

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, EAID

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE WFP ASSISTANCE TO PLO AND LEBANON EMERGENCY

REF: (A) STATE 011211 (B) ROME 0482 (NOTAL)

1. SITUATION IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO BE SUBJECT TO DAILY CHANGE.

2. EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH PLO REPS, AS ROBINSON UNDOUBTEDLY REPORTED, RESULTED LARGELY IN SECRETARIAT EXPLANATIONS OF REGULATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS WITH ADMISSION THAT IF EITHER GOVERNMENT (SYRIA OR LEBANON) REQUESTED ASSISTANCE FOR PALESTINIANS AS A DISTINCT GROUP OR FOR PLO, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED, BUT APPROPRIATELY RELATED TO UNRWA. HOWEVER LATEST DEVELOPMENT TAKES FORM OF RENEWED APPROACH FROM PLO REPS LOCATED IN SYRIA CONCERNING THE PLIGHT OF FAMILIES IN LEBANON, HEADS OF WHICH HAVE BECOME JOBLESS WITH CONSEQUENT NEED FOR ASSISTANCE TO SOME 150,000 PERSONS IN LEBANON. AQUINOPROBABLY WILL REFER QUESTION TO UN, UNLESS DG TAKES A DIFFERENT LINE, IN TERMS OF WHETHER RECENT ACTIONS IN NEW YORK HAVE ANY IMPLICATIONS RE ELIGIBILITY OF PLO.

3. WITH REGARD LEBANESE EMERGENCY PROJECT 1050, DISTRIBUTION IS NOT YET TAKING PLACE. FIRST DELIVERY TO THE COUNTRY (360 TONS CHEESE) IS SUPPOSED TO BE ARRIVING LEBANON ABOUT

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20 JANUARY, AND OTHER COMMODITIES OVER NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS.

WFP INTENTION IS TO DELAY DISTRIBUTION UNTIL THREE OR FOUR COMMODITIES ARE AVAILABLE, AND IF WHEAT IS ONE OF THE MISSING IT CAN BE BORROWED FROM OTHER PROJECT OR LEBANESE STOCKS AND REPLACED. THUS DISTRIBUTION PROBABLY WOULD NOT START UNTIL LATE FEBRUARY/EARLY MARCH, BUT WHETHER WFP CAN HOLD TO ABOVE PLAN IS OPEN TO QUESTION. SO IS THE DELIVERY SCHEDULE.

4. TODAY'S INFORMATION IS TO EFFECT THAT A SHIP IN PORT (REPORTED AS TRIPOLI) WAS FORCED TO UNLOAD 600 TONS GRAIN DESTINED FOR ANOTHER COUNTRY. (ANOTHER AND MORE LIKELY VERSION IS THAT IT WAS 600 TONS OF WFP COMMODITIES TAKEN OVER AT PORT BY ONE OF THE FACTIONS, NOT GOVERNMENT.) TOGETHER WITH OTHER PROBLEMS THIS HAS LED TO INCREASING SKEPTICISM IN WFP AS TO REASONABLY RELIABLE DELIVERIES. CONSEQUENTLY 540 TONS DRIED MILK READY FOR SHIPMENT FROM ROTTERDAM AND 3,000 TONS SWEDISH WHEAT NOW ARE BEING HELD UP. CANNED BEEF (180 TONS) FROM CANADA HAS BEEN CALLED FORWARD BUT NO BOOKING AS YET. TENDERS ARE OUT FOR 522 TONS OIL WITH CLOSING DATE ON AT LEAST PART OF IT JANUARY 22 FOR EARLY FEBRUARY SHIPMENT. NO CALL FORWARDS MADE ON ADDITIONAL TONS 6,135 WHEAT, 162 CHEESE, 243 MILK, 81 BEEF.

5. DESPITE ALL THESE UNCERTAINTIES THERE IS UNDER CONSIDERATION A PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE PROGRAM APPROVAL ANOTHER \$5.6 MILLION. APPARENTLY THE DG CHANGED HIS MIND AGAIN, (PARA 2 REF B; NOTAL). VOLPE

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